GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CULTURE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:42
ANSWERED ON:25.04.2016
Expenditure on Excavation Proposals
Tharoor Dr. Shashi

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware that the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) spends less than percent of its expenditure on exploration and excavation activities, which has led to numerous cases of excavation proposals nor being undertaken or being left incomplete and if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether the Government is taking any measures, including steps to increase financial allocation, to encourage greater exploration efforts by the ASI;

(c) whether the Government would also consider directing the ASI to establish prescribed criteria for prioritization of maintenance efforts, as the absence of prescribed criteria has resulted in monuments being chosen arbitrarily for conservation works; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons there for?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE, CULTURE AND TOURISM (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) AND MINISTER OF STATE, CIVIL AVIATION (DR. MAHESH SHARMA)

(a)The Archaeological Survey of India is undertaking exploration & excavation work based upon the potential of the site as well as problem oriented research projects covering vast time period and vast geographical area. The expenditure on exploration and excavation as a percentage of total expenditure is not reflective of the importance given to this activity.

The scheme of village to village survey for recording and documenting the antiquarian remains and archaeological sites by the ASI has been revived since April,2014 and 3886 villages have been surveyed and 1547 villages have yielded antiquarian remains and structures/ancient mound upto 31st March 2016.

All the excavation branches of ASI are regularly excavating the sites in various parts of the country. ASI has neither stopped the excavation work nor left it incomplete.

(b)Archaeological Survey of India have been gradually increasing amount on exploration/excavation work which is given below:

Year Expenditure (in lacs)
2013-14 301.05
2014-15 400.11
2015-16 542.00
2016-17 Allotment 555.00

(c) & (d) The conservation work of protected monuments is a continuous process. The criteria for prioritization of conservation efforts is already in place such as structural repairs, consolidation, stabilization, restoration of damaged parts, strengthening/replacement of decayed fabric, improvement of drainage, chemical preservation, public amenities, environmental development etc. Hence, the monuments for conservation are not chosen arbitrarily but as per the availability of the resources and actual requirements at the site with priorities outlined above.